THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) The Medical Store Depots under the Directorate General of Health Services have a stock of Rs. 4.20 crore worth of expired medicines. This stock has accumulated in the Depots right since their inception. As compared to the total purchase made since its inception, the figure works out to less than 1 %.

(b) The expiry of medicine used to take place earlier because the Depots used to build up their stock without confirmed demand. Four years ago, it was decided to procure stores only against confirmed demand. As a result, no expiry of medicine purchased during the last three years has taken place.

(c) and (d) For medicines which expired prior to 1999, a departmental committee was set up to enquire into the matter. The committee found the heads of GMSDs responsible for their failure to supervise the purchase and disposal system in the Depots and for circumventing the delegated powers. Explanations of the concerned officers have been called for and action is contemplated.

Collection of donations to improve the conditions in Medical Colleges and Hospitals

1882. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the news-item captioned, "They cleared the red tape to make the system work", which appeared in the Times of India, dated the 23rd December, 2002;

(b) whether it is a fact that Patient Welfare Committees in Madhya Pradesh have been collecting donations, etc. to improve conditions in the Medical Colleges and Hospitals;

(c) whether this innovative idea has been given by the Planning Commission and UN Development Programme Agencies; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard and the places where this is being implemented and how far it has been successful?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.